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AUTHORSHIP OF SHAKSPERE

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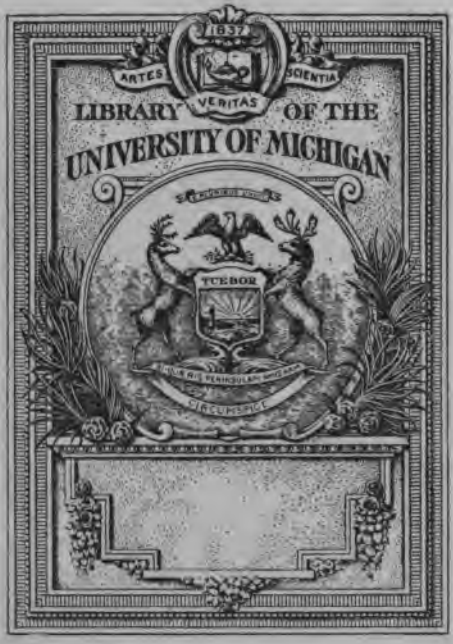

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THE

AUTHORSHIP OF SHAKSPERE

AND

AN EXAMINATION OF THE CLAIM MADE THAT FRANCIS BACON WROTE THE SHAKSPERE WORKS

BY

ORLANDO M. BARNES

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THE AUTHORSHIP OF SHAKSPERE

AND

AN EXAMINATION OF THE CLAIM MADE THAT BACON WROTE THE SHAKSPERE WORKS.*

Now, nearly three hundred years after Shakspere's death, we are told he was not the author of the plays and poems that have, since his own day, been regarded as his, that Francis Bacon wrote them.

I propose to recall some important facts in Shakspere's life, to give some account of the production of these works and to show that there is no reason to doubt his authorship, or to suppose that Bacon had any part in composing them.

It has been said, "We need not trouble ourselves about the authorship of these works. They are as valuable if written by Bacon as if written by Shakspere." While the works are not affected the lesson imparted by the achievement is affected. Beside this, our moral sense is wounded by an effort to deprive a deceased author of just fame as much as though he were alive, and the race is interested in preserving to great names the honors of their achievements.

If, as claimed by a few, Bacon wrote these works but himself had them imputed to another, he is to blame if he gets not the honors of authorship. But, as Shakspere claimed to be their author, to deprive him

* A paper read before the U. and I. Club, Lansing, Michigan.

of the honor of his works is a wrong of the greatest magnitude.

Published as Shakspere's in his and Bacon's lifetime, accepted as Shakspere's by enemies and friends and for so long a time without question, his authorship cannot be shaken except by the clearest and strongest proofs.

Bacon was not in all respects a man to be admired. He possessed great ability and was a great scholar, philosopher and author. However, he was selfish and scheming, to the point of dishonesty at times. As minister of state and attorney general he was the agent of tyranny. As a judge he was corrupt. He was impeached, confessed numerous crimes and was fined forty thousand pounds and subjected to imprisonment in the Tower.

The dissatisfaction one feels on seeing this effort made to deprive Shakspere of the honors of authorship, is in no way lessened by the effort to bestow them upon Bacon.

THE claim that Bacon was the real author of the Shakspere plays was first made about forty years ago. This was done by Delia Bacon, then of Boston, a lady of much learning and respectability, and a descendant of the historical Bacons.

She thought she found in the plays a hidden meaning that corresponded with things in Bacon's known works. Being of a mystical turn of mind she arrived at the conclusion that Bacon wrote the Shakspere plays, from that which was no natural support to her conclusion. Having thus reached a conclusion, without evidence, no obstacle, to her belief, seemed insur-

mountable. The smallest things in its favor were confirmation strong as proofs from holy writ.

She visited Europe in pursuit of things to confirm her convictions. Wrote an article which appeared in Putman's Magazine in January, 1856, to support her position, and finally a book. She suffered great privation in order to do this, such as justly entitled her to admiration and sympathy.

Her book met a storm of ridicule.

She became insane, and had to be confined in an asylum where she died.

It has seemed to me that those who doubt Shakspere's authorship have overlooked the well established facts in his life.

I wish to draw attention to some of these.

The evidence will show that he was as famous in his day as an author as Longfellow or Tennyson in ours, if we make proper allowance for the fact that the magazine and newspaper did not then exist.

One author enumerates fifty-seven cotemporary notices of him in books and records of his time, and one hundred and eighty-five in the course of the century. But there are more.

It is the habit of those who assail his authorship, to depreciate him and exalt Bacon.

We do know many things that refute this depreciation.

We know he was an actor in London theaters. He is mentioned in the Catalogue of Players, published at the time. He is included in the catalogue of "Principal actors in all these plays," in the First Folio edition of the plays.

We know that he and his company of actors had a grant from King James to carry on theatrical business, and that in this royal grant William Shakspere is named with Burbage, Heminge, Condell and others.*

We know that he and his company appeared often before Elizabeth and James. We know also that he rose rapidly in life. A romantic Stratford youth in 1582, eleven years later we find him a man of consequence in London, a part owner of a theater, a writer of very popular poems, dedicating two of them, the Venus and Adonis and the Lucrece, to a distinguished nobleman and patron of learning.

Though we cannot say just how he spent his time from 1582 to 1593, we may safely conclude that with natural genius he was accumulating the knowledge and discipline to fit him for his calling as actor and author. Our immortal Lincoln, with no schooling, no early opportunities, by force of native genius became at length one of the greatest orators, and finally president of the United States. Shakspere's rise was similar. As we can say of Lincoln, no college graduate, no doctor of laws, was a better orator, so we may say of Shakspere, no college graduate was a better dramatist.

There are books we know he must have read. Among these William Paynter's Palace of Pleasure, "beautified, adorned and well furnished with pleasant histories and excellent novelles," and which set forth "the great valience of noble gentlemen," "the wonderful patience of puissant princes," "the great bearing of adverse fortune." This book was the source of

* See White's Life. LXXIX, Acta Regia, p. 517; Bell's Shakspere, Vol. I, p. 234.

the plots of several of the plays, and traces of its spirit are found in them.

The Gesta Romanorum is another book he must have read. He may have read it in the Latin. It had, however, been translated and printed in English. It is the source of many things in Shakspere.

Plutarch's Lives he must have read, for this work furnishes the historical matter for the Roman and Grecian plays. North's English translation had been published five years before he was born.

Holinshed's Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland, published when Shakspere was thirteen years old, is largely the source of the facts in the plays denominated The Histories. This must have been familiar to the dramatist.

In one of Gonzalo's speeches in the Tempest (Act 2, S. I), is a passage that shows that the author had read Montaigne's Essay on Cannibals (Ch. 30, B. I). In the British museum there is a copy of Montaigne's Essays, translated by Florio into English, published in 1603. On one of the title pages is found a genuine signature of William Shakspere.

So we can safely say he was familiar with the most suggestive works of fiction of his time, the most valuable book of ancient biographies, the most important history of his country then extant, and an extensive collection of the best essays ever written.

An acquaintance with such books as these indicates a knowledge of many others.

But why attempt to show the books he had studied? The dramatic author must acquire his knowledge and power from his study of human nature, and this study is prosecuted by constant and intelligent observation and experience. Here natural genius avails most of all.

An old cotemporary tells us that "he did gather humors of men daily wherever he came." It was in this field most of all that he learned what produces pleasure, what pain, what sadness, what mirth, what joy, what grief, and so on through the catalogue of emotions. And here in this book of nature he learned the things to be said and the things to be done to produce these emotions.

It is proper to add in this connection, that the acting of the plays was a training in the same direction. The very greatest of dramatic writers have been actors, and that, too, in their own plays.

We know, too, that Shakspere accumulated a fortune. That he was proprietor of New Place, in Stratford, one of its most considerable mansions.

Nor was he of mean extraction. He was of ancient family, both on his father's and on his mother's side. In legal documents, early in life he is styled a Yeoman, a term that implied respectability. It was not applicable to any one not a land owner. In documents of later life he is styled a gentleman, which shows that he had risen in the social scale. In the Parish Register of his burial he is styled "William Shakspere, Gentleman." *

Shakspere's will is a well known, authentic document, a record. It tells a story of achievements and refinements. Note the numerous bequests and the reasons for them. The following for examples:

"Item I give and bequeath . . . to Anthony Nashe, Gent. XXVI s. VIII d. To Mr. John Nashe, XXVI s. VIII d. and to

* See Hal.-Phil. Outline of the Life of S. Vol. 2, p. 323. Bell's Shakspere Works, Vol. 2, pp. 500, 501. Boswell's Malone's S. Vol. 2, p. 615. Hudson's Life, Vol. 1, p. 44.

my fellows, John Heminge, Richard Burbage and Henry Condell, XXVI s. VIII d. apiece to buy themselves rings."

Of course, these were memorials of affection.

The many bequests testify to his wealth and achievements; the reasons for giving show his amiability and refinement.

Burbage, Heminge and Condell were, as the will expresses, associates in the theaters in London. The two latter became the publishers of his plays. Burbage was the greatest actor of the Elizabethan age. His father, also an associate of Shakspere's, had built the first theater ever built in England.

DIRECT PROOFS OF SHAKSPERE'S AUTHORSHIP.

I.

These works were all published as Shakspere's during the lifetime of Bacon, without anyone questioning his authorship.

There are forty-one separate works. Most of the thirty-seven authentic plays were published at first separately, some of them many times. So the Venus and Adonis, the Lucrece, the Lover's Complaint, and the Sonnets, were separately published and at different times. Counting the different editions there were about eighty-five publications previous to the collected edition of 1623. Copies still exist of all, or nearly all of these original issues. So we can see how the authorship was set forth.

Some of the publications, especially some of the earlier ones, gave no author's name; whenever the author is named it is Shakspere. All of these early

publications except that of King John, are found to have been entered upon the Stationer's Register, the system of copyrighting of that day; and here also when an author's name is given it is Shakspere.

The evidence of these early issues of the Shakspere works is unquestionable. I have here the reprints of twenty of the separate plays issued in Shakspere's lifetime. Here is the Merchant of Venice, published in 1600. The title page says: "As it hath been divers times acted by the Lord Chamberlaine, his servants, written by William Shakspere."

Perhaps if we keep in mind how these plays grew to their state of excellence it will aid us in disposing of all questions before us.

The different issues of the same play in Shakspere's lifetime differ often considerably, showing that the plays were revised by the author as improvements were discovered or suggested by the acting of the plays. Thus in all the editions of Richard the Third after the first, it is said: "Newly augmented by William Shakspere." In the second and subsequent editions of Hamlet, this language is used: "By William Shakspere, newly reprinted and enlarged to almost as much again as it was."

Similar evidences of revision appear in the title pages of other of the plays republished while he lived.

To suppose, as many do, that the plays were conceived and written at first and once for all, just as we now have them, is incorrect. They were a growth; just as all great works of all great authors are. The plays were acted and some of them many times before the copies we now have of them were put in their present state. "As it hath been divers times acted" appears on many of the title pages of the old quartos,

as I have read from the title of the Merchant of Venice.

The title page of the first issue of the Merry Wives of Windsor is suggestive. It contains this memorandum: "By William Shakspere. As it hath been divers times acted by the Right Honorable my Lord Chamberlaine's servants, both before her Majestie and elsewhere." I take this from the edition of 1602.

The title page of the edition of Lear, issued in 1608, is of the same significance. It reads: "As it was played before the King's Majesty at White Hall," etc.

Shakspere witnessed the acting of these plays and himself acted in them. He noted the effects of the language used, the incidents and the scenes represented, and the mode of presenting them, and, in the actor's own way,—the actor who is likewise the author, brought them to their present state of excellence.

This work ceased when he died. Though Bacon lived many years after no revisions of these plays were made.

The Venus and Adonis published in 1593, and the Lucrece published the next year, were both dedicated to Lord Southampton in addresses over Shakspere's own name, and in which addresses he declares the works to be his.

These various publications of the Shakspere works, in Bacon's day, extend through a period of thirty-three years from 1593. The period is sufficiently long and the number of publications so great as to render it morally impossible for the real author to be unknown to cotemporaries.

All the facts attending the publications, among these the dedications, refute the supposition that the works

were not his whose name appears on the title pages as author.

I have here a list of publications of the plays and poems during the lifetime of Bacon. Though not complete it is full enough for our purpose. You will remember Bacon was born in 1561 and died in 1626; that Shakspere was born in 1564 and died in 1616.

The number of publications was great and manifestly sufficient to render an author well known in any age. Indeed, no English author had ever witnessed the publication of so many of his works; and few authors have since seen so many publications of their works. (See Appendix A.)

II.

The cotemporaries of Shakspere, both friends and enemies, who must have known who was the author, all regarded him as the author of the works that are published as his. No one, during his lifetime, nor for two hundred and forty years after, questioned his authorship or attributed any of these works to Bacon.

III.

His cotemporaries regarded him as one of the greatest poets of the world. So Meres, Milton, Ben Jonson, and others regarded him. And so cotemporary historians and chronicles speak of him.

Let us refer to

SOME MENTIONS OF SHAKSPERE AS AN AUTHOR BY COTEMPORARIES.

In William Camden's work concerning Britain, dated

1603; in Carew's work on "The Excellencies of the English Tongue" printed in Camden's Remains in 1614; in Stowe's Chronicles of England, continued by Howes, printed in 1615, Shakspere is treated of as one of England's greatest poets. By all of them he is mentioned by name as such.*

In Camden's Remains he is said to be "one of the most pregnant wits of our time."

In Stowe's Chronicles he is included in the list of authors preceded by the following observations.

"Our moderne and present excellent poets which worthily flourish in their works, and all of them, to my own knowledge, lived together in this Queen's reigne."

That he enjoyed among his cotemporaries a high reputation as poet is shown by one indisputable fact. He was by all regarded as the author of these matchless works that go by his name.

Could any one be regarded in any age, as the author of such works without having a high reputation for authorship? Surely not.

Green in his "Gwatsworth of wit, bought with a million of repentance" published in 1592, calls Shakspere an upstart. He says, "There is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *tiger's heart wrapt in a player's hide*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you, and being an absolute Johannes Factotum, is, in his own

* See The Century of Praise, pp. 59, 108, 111. 2. Hal.-Phil. Outlines of the Life of Shakspere, pp. 144, 152-5. Stowe's General Chronicles of England Augmented, page 831.

conceit, the only Shakscene in a countrie." I quote this from Green's Works and Life, by Dyce.

This shows that at the age of twenty-eight Shakspere's manifest ability and rising fame had made him an object of jealousy.

Henry Chettle, a publisher, in 1592, in apologizing for publishing Green's assault, says in his "Kind Hearts Dreame"—

> Myself have seen his demeanor no less civil than he excellent in the quality he professes. Besides divers of worship have reported his uprightness in dealing which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, that proves his art.*

In Weever's Epigrams published in 1599 he is styled "honie tongued Shakspere."

In the collection of choice literature styled "The Garden of the Muses," published in 1600 he is quoted along with great authors, among them Daniel, Spenser, Ben Jonson, Marlowe.

In the drama, "The Return from Parnassus" purporting to represent the training of college students for the stage, acted by Cambridge students shortly before Queen Elizabeth's death, and published in 1606, ten years before Shakspere's death, is this passage:

> Burbage: A little teaching will mend these faults and it may be besides they will be able to pen a part.
>
> Kempe: Few of the University *pen* play well; they smell too much of that writer Ovid, and that writer Metamorphosis, and talk too much of Proserpina and Jupiter. Why there's our fellow Shakspere puts them all down—aye, and Ben Jonson too, etc.

There were two plays called "The Return from

* I. Outlines of the Life of S. 303, Dyce's Green.

Parnassus." There are other mentions of Shakspere in them. One of these is this:

"Gull: Let this duncified world esteem of Spencer and Chaucer, I'll worship sweet Mr. Shakspere and to honor him will lay his Venus and Adonis under my pillow as we read of one (I don't well remember his name but I am sure he was a king) slept with Homer under his bed's head.*

Francis Meres was born the year after Shakspere was, but lived thirty years longer. He was a divine "a master of arts of both universities" and an author. In his Palladis Tamea, a noted school book, published in 1598, he gives a "Comparative discourse of our English poets with the Greek, Latin and Italian poets." In this he ranks Shakspere as one of the greatest of poets.

I quote:

"As the Greek tongue is made famous and eloquent by Homer, Hesiod, Euripides, Æschilus, Sophocles, Pindarus, Phocylides, and Aristophanes; and the Latin tongue by Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Silius Italicus, Lucanus, Lucretius, Ausonius and Claudianus; so the English tongue is mightily enriched and gorgeously invested in rare ornaments and resplendent abiliments by Sir Philip Sidney, Spencer, Daniel, Drayton, Warner, Shakspere, Marlow and Chapman.

"As the soul of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweet soul of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakspere, as witness his Venus and Adonis, his Lucrece, his

*We learn from the prologue to the Return from Parnassus, published in Hawkins, that there were two other dramas connected with this. One "Journey to Parnassus," the other having the same title as this, viz.: "Return from Parnassus." It turns out to be a first part. These two plays have been found and published. See Fresh Allusions, Shakspere Society Pub. p. 12. Also Hawkins' Origin of the English Drama, V. 3, p. 204. 9, Dodsley's Select. Col. of Old English Plays, 185.

Sonnets, among his private friends, etc. As Plantus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latins, so Shakspere among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage. For comedy, witness his Gentlemen of Verona, his Errors, his Love Labor's Lost, his Love Labor's Won, his Midsummer Night Dream and his Merchant of Venice. For tragedy, his Richard the 2, Richard 3, Henry 4, King John, Titus Andronicus and his Romeo and Juliet.

"As Epius Stolo said that the Muses would speak with Plantus' tongue if they would speak Latin, so I say that the Muses would speak with Shakspere's fine filed phrase if they would speak English."

Let us pause a moment on this passage from Meres: The author of it was a critic, the book was intended for and no doubt attained a wide circulation. It was published eighteen years before Shakspere's death.

And what does it show? That he had attained the rank as poet in which Homer, Æschylus and Virgil stand. It declares him most excellent in tragedy and comedy and expressly states these plays and poems each one by name to be his. And what higher character could be given him as a poet than is given in this sentence: "If the Muses would speak English they would speak in Shakspere's fine filed phrase." The appellation "mellifluous" here applied to Shakspere is found in subsequent mentions of him by other cotemporary authors which tends to show that Meres' book was widely read and that its characterization of Shakspere was deemed a fit one.

John Davies in his "Scourge of Follie," published in 1611, styles him "Our English Terrence, Will Shakspere."

Now these, and similar things, were said of Shakspere and his works years before his death.

In a poem by Wm. Basse, a cotemporary entitled

"On William Shakspere who died in April, 1616," is the following assignment of him among poets. Spencer and Beaumont had died not long before. The poet groups them, and Chaucer together, saying:

> Renowned Spencer lie a thought more nigh
> To learned Chaucer, and rare Beaumont lie
> A little nearer Spencer to make room
> For Shakspere in your three-fold four-fold tomb.
> To lodge all four in one bed make a shift
> Until doomsday; for hardly will a fifth
> Betwixt this day and that by fate be slain,
> For whom your curtains may be drawn again.

This was written before 1623, for Jonson in his verses commending the first edition of Shakspere refers to it.

Leonard Digges was a cotemporary of Shakspere. He was a scholar educated at Oxford University and a poet. The circumstances seem to show that he was intimately acquainted with Shakspere. In a poem published along with the first collected edition of the plays and in another published in 1640 he attributes these works to him and styles him in the later poem "the never-dying Shakspere," and his works "the pattern of all wit."

Ben Jonson, in his works published after Shakspere's death, says this of him:

> I remember, the players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakspere, that in his writings whatsoever he penned he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been, would he had blotted a thousand, which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance, who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted, and to justify my own candor; for I loved the man and

do honor his memory on this side idolatry as much as any. He was indeed honest and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantasy, brave notions and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped. Many times he fell into those things could not escape laughter, as when he said in the person of Cæsar,—One speaking to him "Cæsar thou dost me wrong:" He replied, "Cæsar did never wrong but with just cause," and such like, which were ridiculous. *

I might add here the unqualified commendation of the plays as Shakspere's by Jonson in his poem entitled "To the memory of my beloved Master William Shakspere, and what he hath left us."

In this tribute to Shakspere and his works, Jonson, one of the most learned men of his time, a great dramatic author himself, and an acquaintance of Bacon as well as of Shakspere, bears the fullest testimony to his authorship of these works and to his greatness. He declares he has surpassed both the Greeks and the Romans. Calls him "my gentle Shakspere," says he was not for one age but "for all time" and concludes with these lines:

> But stay, I see thee in the Hemisphere
> Advanced and made a constellation there.
> Shine forth thou star of poets and with rage
> Or influence, chide or cheer the drooping stage
> Which since thy flight from hence hath mourned like night
> And despairs day but for thy volumes light. †

Thomas Fuller, the author of many historical works, among others "The Church History of England" and "The History of the Worthies of England," was eight years old when Shakspere died. He writes of Shak-

* See Jonson's Works, Vol. IX, p. 175.
† See Jonson's Works, Vol. VIII., p. 329. First Folio of Shakspere.

spere as one of England's worthies. Among other things he says:

> Shakspeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon in this County, in whom three eminent poets may seem in some sort to be compounded. 1. Martial in the war like sound of his surname whence some may conjecture him of a military extraction *hasti vibrans*, or Shak-Speare. 2. Ovid, the most natural and witty of all poets . . . 3. Plautus who was an exact comedian yet never any scholar, as our Shakspeare, if alive would confess himself . . . He was an eminent instance of the truth of that rule, '*poeta nun fit sed nascitur*. One is not made but born a poet' . . . Many were the wit combats betwixt him and Ben Jonson which two I behold like a Spanish great Gallion and an English man of war. Master Jonson like the former was built far higher in learning, solid but slow in his performances. Shakspeare with the English man of war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about and take advantage of all winds by the quickness of his wit and invention.*

Now this historian who lived in Shakspere's day, describes him as possessing the combined qualities of three great poets, famous in the history of literature. The wit combats between Shakspere and Jonson refute many of the aspersions upon the former. It was not Bacon that showed superior to Jonson in these wit combats. The victor in the wit combats was also the author of the plays.

Milton was likewise eight years old when Shakspere died. He began to write poetry early. His first published poem is his epitaph on Shakspere. It seems to have been written when a monument to Shakspere was in contemplation. It was published when he was

*2. Hal.-Phil. p. 78. Dall's Life of S., p. 28.

twenty-four years old, sixteen years after Shakspere's death. This is an extract from it.

> What needs my Shakspere for his honored bones
> The labor of an age in piled stones,
> Or that his hallowed relicques should be hid
> Under a starry pointed pyramid.
> Dear Son of Memory, great heir of Fame,
> What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name
> Thou in our wonder and astonishment
> Has built thyself a live long monument.

In his *L'Allegro*, Milton again speaks of Shakspere in these endearing words:

> Then to the well trod stage anon
> If Jonson's learned sock be on
> Or sweetest Shakspere, Fancy's child
> Warble his native wood notes wild. *

Now how could the great Milton have said these things of Shakspere except he was known to be a great poet?

I may properly cite here some lines placed beneath an engraved portrait of Shakspere published in 1640, while many were living who had known him personally.

> This shadow is renowned Shakspere's, soul of the age,
> The applause, delight, the wonder of the stage.
> Nature herself was proud of his designs
> And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines.
> The learned will confess his works are such
> As neither man nor muse can praise too much.

Haywood, in his "Heirarchie of the Blessed Angels"

* Milton's Poetical Works, Vol. II., pp. 223 and 178.

published in 1635, speaking of the familiar names applied to eminent persons, says:

Mellifluous Shakspere whose enchanting quill commanded mirth or passion was but Will.

Rev. John Ward, Vicar of Stratford-on-Avon, in his journal written some time prior to 1663, states:

I have heard that Mr. Shakspere was a natural wit, without any art at all. He frequented the plays all his younger time, but in his elder days lived at Stratford and supplied the stage with two plays a year and for that had an allowance so large that he spent at the rate of a thousand a year. Shakspere, Drayton and Ben Jonson, had a merry meeting and it seems drank too hard, for Shakspere died of a fever thence contracted.

Aubrey, in his lives of eminent men, completed in 1680, says:

This William (Shakspere) being inclined naturally to poetry and acting, came to London, I guess, about 18, and was an actor at one of the play houses and did act exceedingly well. Now Ben Jonson was never a good actor, but an excellent instructor. He began early to make essays at dramatique poetry, which at that time was very low, and his plays took well. He was a handsome, well shaped man, very good company, and of a very ready and pleasant, smooth wit.

Ben Jonson and he did gather humors of men daily wherever they came. I have heard Sir William Davenant and Mr. Thomas Shadwell who is counted the best comedians we now have, say he had a most prodigious wit, and did admire his natural parts beyond all other dramatical writers. *

THERE are many entries in court records showing the

* II. Outlines of the Life of S., Vol. II., p. 70.

appearance of Shakspere before Queen Elizabeth and King James.*

A few days after the accession of King James in December, 1603, Shakspere and his company played before him at the seat of the Earl of Pembroke by invitation. I may anticipate by mentioning that when Shakspere's works were published in 1623 by two of these players, the volume was dedicated to this same Earl of Pembroke and his brother. In this dedication they recount the kindness of these noblemen to the plays and to Shakspere.

On the coronation of the king, he and his company were members of the procession. Soon afterwards they played before the king at the Palace of White Hall, Othello, Measure for Measure and King Lear.

The title page of the first edition of Love Labor's Lost, reads, "as it was presented before her highness this last Christmas;" that of the Merry Wives of Windsor, as already mentioned, states that the same had been played before the Queen. That of King Lear, that it had been acted before King James at White Hall.

The royal grant by King James, giving to Burbage, Shakspere and their associates, the right to act plays throughout the kingdom is in existence.

By reason of this grant they were called the King's servants. In this Shakspere is mentioned with others.†

ALL agree that Shakspere made a *fortune in the eighteen years between 1592 and 1610.*

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*8. Enc. Brit. 142, note. Hal.-Phil., Vol. II, pp. 82-3, White's Life of S., LXXIX, Fleay's Life of S., Table III.

† See also Rapin's History of England. Acta Regia, p. 517.

He had no resource save his pen and the interest he held in the theaters for which he wrote. He was manifestly a man capable of earning large compensation with his pen. His reputation would give a poem a sale beyond that of any name of that time.

Thus the publisher of Troylus and Cressida, issued in 1609, says that if the comedies were not styled comedies they would be admired for their gravities:

> Especially this author's comedies, that are so framed to the life, that they serve for the most common commentaries of all the actions of our lives, showing such a dexterity and power of witte that the most displeased with plays, are pleased with his comedies. . . . . And believe this, that when he is gone and his comedies out of sale, you will scramble for them and set up a new English inquisition.*

The first publisher of Othello, says a preface commending the work is unnecessary for the "Author's name is sufficient to vent his works." This was in 1622.

So popular was he as an author, that numerous works with which he probably had nothing to do, were, even in his lifetime, attributed to him, to aid their sale. So also other less known authors were charged by envious critics with having been aided by him to compose their works. Thus it was alleged against Ford that he was dependent upon him for the best of his works. And critics compared him with other great authors. One has summed up the comparisons

* A prediction fully realized. Any of these quartos will readily bring a hundred times the first price.

between him, Ford, Ben Jonson and Tom Randolph as follows:

> But after times with full consent
> This truth will all acknowledge,
> Shakspere and Ford from heaven were sent
> But Ben and Tom from college.

That Shakspere was an industrious author Ben Jonson testifies, and he surely did know. After describing his poetic nature, he says:

> Yet must I not give nature all; thy art
> My gentle Shakspere must enjoy a part.
> For tho' the Poet's matter nature be
> His art doth give the fashion, and that he
> Who casts to write a living line, must sweat,
> (Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
> Upon the Muses anvil . . .
> For a good poet's made as well as born.
> And such wert thou.

IMMEDIATELY after his death a monument was erected in the Stratford Church where he was buried to commemorate him as *An Author.* By it he is represented in the act of writing his works. Beneath the bust is this inscription:

> Judicio Pylium, Genio Socratem, Arte Maronem,
> Terra tegit, populus mœret, Olympus habet.

This is a translation:

> In judgment a Nestor, in wisdom a Socrates, in art a Virgil.
> The earth covers him, the people mourn, Olympus holds him.

Such an epitaph would never, in any age, be placed on the tomb of any man unless he was known to be great. Yet this was done in the case of William Shakspere immediately after his death. He is here represented as having the characteristics, not of one merely, but of three of the great of past ages.

Another, and equally strong testimony to his greatness as an author, is found in the English Epitaph engraved upon this monument. It is this:

> Stay, passenger, why goest thou by so fast,
> Read, if thou canst, whom envious death hath placed
> Within this monument; Shakspere with whom
> Quick nature dide whose name doth deck this tombe
> Far more than cost, sith all that he hath write
> Leaves living art but page to serve his witt. *

Immediately after his death these ascriptions of supreme literary greatness find place on his tomb. Such then was the estimate placed upon William Shakspere by those who personally knew him. These are all attestations of authorship as well as greatness.

IV.

The publishers of the first collected edition of the plays, Heminge and Condell were associates of Shakspere. The plays had been written for their own theater and they had acted them before they were ever printed. They knew the author intimately and his handwriting, and must have known that he wrote the plays. They claimed to print them from his own

* See White's Life of S., p. CV.

papers. They say they published them just as he conceived them.*

We know many of them were played while they were in manuscript. We learn from Meres that Shakspere's Sonnets were in circulation among his private friends in 1598, yet they were not published till eleven years after; they were therefore read from his manuscript. Several of the plays mentioned by Meres were not published till many years after. Twelfth Night was acted more than twenty years before it was published. "As it hath been divers times acted;" "As it hath been often with great applause played publicly;" "As it was sundry times acted" and the like expressions, are found in the title pages of the first printed copies of the plays. So they were played and by these publishers, before they were ever printed. The manuscript must have been familiar.

Nearly half the plays were not printed so far as we know, until published in the Folio edition of 1623. These must have been printed from the manuscript of the author. Others may have been printed at that time from his manuscript.†

Thus chroniclers, authors, poets and publishers cotemporary with Shakspere inform us that *he was* the the author of these works. In this testimony, all, enemies of his as well as friends, unite and agree and the copyright entries in the Stationer's registry confirm them. On the other hand not a single cotemporary states or even intimates that Bacon wrote or had anything to do with the production of them.

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* See their address to the Great Variety of Readers. First Folio.
† Gollancz's Introduction to Lear.

REFUTATIONS.

On perusing the books and articles that have been written to show that Bacon wrote them, one is struck by the want of agreement between them. Some maintain that he not only wrote all of Shakspere but also numerous works of other authors. Others that he wrote only the Shakspere plays but not the poems. Others that he wrote only Hamlet, Julius Cæsar, Anthony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus and Timon. Nor do they agree as to the basis of opinion. One founds his opinion on Shakspere's supposed lack of learning and Bacon's great learning, another on alleged parallelisms between the works of Bacon and Shakspere, another on a hidden mysterious cipher which others discard, and so on.

These things show there is no set of facts that naturally and logically tend to show that Shakspere did not write the works or that Bacon wrote them.

The considerations presented on behalf of Bacon's authorship are often full of mysteriousness. Mystery has a fascination that is apt to captivate the fancy. In this state of mind there is much danger that the investigator will, like Don Quixote, follow the lead of fancy instead of reason and as he did, conceive things different from what they really are, and like Shakspere's man "of imagination all compact, give to airy nothing a local habitation and a name."

(*a*) It is said Shakspere makes no mention of his works in his will. True, but Bacon makes no mention of them in his will. Bacon's omission is most significant, as in his will he does undertake to provide for the publication by *his executors*, of all his own

literary works. He confides these to his executor in this language: "All my writings, both of English and of Latin." None of the Shakspere works are found in this collection.*

This is equivalent to a declaration from Bacon, a solemn one at death, that he was not the writer of these works.

(*b*) It is said, "We find none of the plays in Shakspere's handwriting." True, but we find none in Bacon's handwriting. As we have just seen many cotemporaries of Shakspere have left evidence that they saw the works in his handwriting, notably Meres and Ben Jonson. The players had them in his handwriting. This has been shown in the passage from Jonson's works already quoted.†

Heminge and Condell say they had them in Shakpere's handwriting when they published the collected edition.

(*d*) It has been said "There is no proof that Shakspere ever published any of his works."

This is incorrect. We know that he did publish the Venus and Adonis in 1593, and dedicated it to Lord Southampton, and likewise the Lucrece in 1594. Other publications of his works may have been by him. However, as the plays were written for particular theaters for acting, they were kept from print as long as possible.

But there is no evidence that Bacon ever had any of these works printed.

We have been told that he published the first collected edition of Shakspere, the folio of 1623.

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*See Bacon's Works, Vol. 6, p. 446, etc.

† See Jonson's Vol. 9, p. 175.

There is not a shadow of proof of this. Besides the claim is absurd. Bacon would never have allowed the errors and blunders that appear in that edition if he had been even the editor.

(*e*) It has been said we have no proof that Shakspere ever claimed to be the author of these works. This is very incorrect. His authorship was never questioned while he lived so that there was no occasion to directly assert it. The plays were announced to be his, published as his, and by him acted in as his. The poems were, as we have seen, published by himself. In the dedication of the Venus and Adonis he expressly says he was the author of it, and calls it the "First heir of my invention."

Bacon never said any of them were his, but on the contrary, at the very close of life in making his will, showed that these were not his, by omitting them from the collection of his literary works, which he declared to be all his works.

Then, too, the works of Bacon had induced no belief, among cotemporaries that he was a great poet. There are no eulogiums of Bacon as a poet. His field was not poetry.

(*f*) It is said Shakspere had not sufficient learning to write these great plays. Of this there is no proof. He was well educated. Besides, the greatest plays in the world were written by actors, not by the greatest scholars or philosophers: As witness, Æschylus among the Greeks, Moliere among the French, as well as Shakspere in England. The Bacons have nowhere written the greatest plays.

Those who say Shakspere was incapable of writing the plays, that Bacon wrote them but allowed them to be attributed to Shakspere in order to conceal his

authorship, are guilty of absurdity. If Shakspere was incapable as claimed, the plays could not have been successfully ascribed to him.

To successfully attribute works to another, that other must not be thought incapable of producing them; otherwise the imputation itself would seem absurd. So it must have been true that Shakspere was not deemed an impossible or an improbable author of these works.

If we allow that Shakspere was too ignorant to write them but that Bacon wrote them and had them imputed to Shakspere how many absurdities follow? And first, was it not absurd in Bacon to assume that the people could be made to believe that such an ignorant man could write these great works? And were not the people absurd who did believe it? And yet we know they all did believe he wrote them. How can these things be made consistent with common sense? Clearly there is error in some of these assumptions. The first error is in assuming that Bacon did write the plays; and the next, that he palmed them off as Shakspere's; and the next that Shakspere was too ignorant to write them. Is it not strange that we, who live three hundred years after Shakspere wrote, should assume to know better about him and his ability than his own intimate personal acquaintances and cotemporaries?

The mode of proving his want of learning now and the use made of it are inconsistent with the mode of proving it and the use made of it in his own time.

Shakspere had rivals. Ben Jonson was one. He did not attempt to meet Shakspere's overshadowing popularity by saying he was not the author of the Shakspere works, a very easy way to put him down if he was not the author. He knew the fact of his

authorship and proceeded on that basis to show his lack of learning because the plays themselves showed him wanting in knowledge; that he had small Latin and less Greek; that he wrote too rapidly and left thousands of lines such that they ought to have been blotted out, and the like. In other words he deduced his conclusions as to Shakspere's learning, from these works.

Now the friends of Bacon's authorship maintain the learning of the plays shows them too great for Shakspere.

His want of learning is not by them proven from his plays. They proceed at once to deprive him of all these and then assert there is no proof that he had the ability to write them. Take from Napoleon all his victories and how can anyone show he was able to win them?

(*g*) It is said Shakspere did not take any care of these works. It is assumed that the author would surely have done this.

But did Bacon take care of them? This want of care proves Bacon could not have been the author, if it has any bearing on the question. If he had been the author he would have cared for them, and included them in his carefully preserved works.

As we have seen, Bacon carefully preserved all his writings. He copied his letters to preserve them; he wrote some of his works five or six times over and had many of them rendered into the Latin language in order to preserve them, as he had no confidence in the perpetuity of the English language. Now if he wrote the plays did he destroy his copies of them and yet preserve everything else?

But we are told he did intend future ages should

know he wrote the plays and for this purpose worked a cipher into some.

Now is it conceivable that if he wrote the plays he would have left this fact to a hidden, mysterious, uncertain cipher when other plain, safe, certain and easier ways were open to him?

Why did he not leave copies of them in his own handwriting, sealed up, if need be, with proper directions not to open them until the future ages when he desired his authorship to be made known? This course has been often pursued by authors. It seems that not *even the existence* of the cipher was made known. The cipher, its meaning, and how to use it, were all concealed it seems, and so remained unknown for three hundred years. How did he expect future ages would find there was a cipher?

If Bacon had written the Shakspere poems, no reason can be imagined for concealing his authorship, for these were popular with all classes, from the first. If he had written the dramas no reason can be conceived for concealing this fact from his executors and it is impossible to find reason for writing the fact in cipher instead of writing it in plain language; for the purpose of writing it at all was to make the fact known at some time, and this purpose would have suggested plain and certain, instead of labored and uncertain, means.

A fact already mentioned, bearing on this question, is overlooked by some.

The plays of Shakspere were written for the theater and the theater did take care of them. The manuscript became the property of the theater when written. More or less of these belonged to the theater at the time of his death.

The authorship of the Shakspere dramas is a subject of interest, and not without reason, for they are among the very greatest works the human mind has produced. It is quite impossible to suppose them the work of any ordinary man. But, if you will consider his real greatness as cotemporaries did, if you will accept that estimate of the man which Dryden expressed, viz., that "He was the man who of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul," you will have no difficulty in crediting the evidence that these great works were the productions of this great soul.

If you but entertain the opinion of Ben Jonson, who knew both Shakspere and Bacon intimately, that although the works of Shakspere showed much want of learning, he was still the

> Soul of the age,
> The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage.

and the man whose memory he honored almost to idolatry, you will not feel inclined to question his authorship or attribute his works to others because of their superior education.

THE assailants of Shakspere's authorship recognize the necessity of doing away the cotemporary evidences of it. This is attempted by a sweeping and most extraordinary supposition. A supposition that lacks two important elements, truth and reasonableness.

There may have been, it is said, an agreement between Bacon, Ben Jonson and others to attribute the plays to Shakspere for the time being, falsely, of course. There is not a word of proof that any such

conspiracy in fact existed. The supposition only increases the number of absurdities and the number of individuals involved in them. This supposed arrangement did not simply require the conspirators to remain silent. It compelled Ben Jonson and others involved in it to repeat deliberate falsehood every time they attributed the plays to Shakspere. Is it supposable that they could all have been induced to so criminate and stultify themselves? Then, too, would Jonson, knowing the plays to be Bacon's, have imputed want of learning to the author? But further, as we have seen, years after both Shakspere and Bacon were dead, Jonson, writing as he says to set himself right with posterity, again stated, among the last things he ever wrote, that Shakspere was the author of the plays. To suppose these statements intentionally false is impossible. Mistakes they could not be. And were the inscriptions put upon Shakspere's Stratford monument intended to perpetuate the falsehood? And did Bacon repeat a falsehood in his will when he stated the collection of literary works delivered to his executors to be all his works, whereas the plays and poems were not in the collection?

An example of misinterpretation of facts is presented in the following incident, viz.:

Not long ago two of Bacon's works were discovered in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland. They were enclosed in a paper wrapper upon which the titles of the works were written, as usual in filing papers. Below this filing the name Shakspere was found written; so also Richard II and Richard III, the first many times. This has been taken to be evidence that Bacon wrote the plays.

The filing, though ancient, was not in Bacon's

handwriting. The writing below the filing was later and in a different hand from the filing. The name Shakspere was written seven or eight times, sometimes a part of it only, thus: "Shakspere, William Shakspere, Shak, Willi Shakspere, Will Shak," and so on, and in all possible disorder.

Richard II and Richard III, being names of famous sovereigns, as well as of Shakspere plays, might have occurred to a scribbler for either of these reasons.

Now what does this scribbling on this envelope prove? First, that it was scribbling only; and second that the name of Shakspere had become famous, so famous that when the idle penman set about to try his pen, this name came to him first of all, and he writes it not once but many times, in full and in part, and on all parts of the envelope. To argue from this that Bacon wrote the play of King Richard is without reason.

We might with as much reason, say Shakspere wrote the Bacon works in the envelope, for his name is on that while Bacon's is not.*

VI.

If it were known that Shakspere did not write the plays, this would not show that Bacon did.

If they were anonymous and we were searching for the author, I do not see how we could, with any plausibility, attribute them to Bacon. His own known works furnish no evidence of fitness. He had not the spirit or experience in life to fit him to write them.

* See the copy of this scribble in "Fresh Allusions" Pub. of New Shakspere Society, p. 2.

He was not an actor. The intrinsic evidence in the plays would refute such claim, even the errors. The mistakes in the dramas and in the printing of them are such as Bacon would never have made or allowed.

His life was a conspicuous one. We know his occupation from year to year, his literary taste and style of writing and what he aimed at in life. Single acts in his life and his career as a whole show he did not and could not have produced these works. I will mention one such act. He was attorney general during part of King James' reign and managed the prosecutions for treason. Among those prosecuted was Edmond Peacham, an aged clergyman. His study was broken open, where a sermon was found containing strictures on the conduct of the King and his ministers. No one will now deny but the strictures were just. Hallam has styled the government of James the most tyranical and its conduct in the Peacham case its most tyranical act. But if the strictures had been false they were not treason. And further, the sermon had never been preached or even read to any one, so that no crime had as yet been committed, even if the language of the writing were treasonable.

Notwithstanding this, the venerable man was arrested.

Bacon knew the judges, if left at liberty, would hold there was no act amounting to crime. He therefore saw, or had them all seen and tampered with in private before the trial, in which they were made to understand that unless they held the writing to be treason, they would be removed.

This was not all. Evidence, or some pretense of evidence must be had. As none existed, to extort a confession the helpless man was subjected to the torture of the rack until his joints were dislocated.

Torture was contrary to the laws of England and prohibited by Magna Charta itself. It had long been regarded as infamous.

But Bacon superintended, as appears from his own letters to the King, this atrocious act. While the man was bound to the rack and in agony, Bacon examined him, as the report says, "before torture, in torture, between tortures and after torture," without obtaining any confession.

In this condition, with dislocated limbs, he was dragged to trial and then, because no reason for executing him existed, he was thrust into prison to die.

Peacham's case is famous in the history of English jurisprudence for many reasons but especially for Bacon's tampering with the judges in private before the trial, and for his use of torture to extract confessions from the accused. Both these things have been reprobated. Tampering with the judges in a criminal case Lord Coke then declared to be a new mode. Bacon is responsible for their use in this age.

But my purpose in referring to these things here, is to ask if anyone can believe that the author of such acts could write the Shakspere works?

But this is only one of many instances that might be produced from Bacon's life to show his unfitness to produce these plays.

THE magnitude of the claim made for Bacon shows it unfounded. It is claimed, as already mentioned, that he not only wrote the Shakspere plays and poems, but also the works of Marlowe, Peele, Green, Burton and Spencer; and the proof seems as strong that he did as that he wrote Shakspere. Burton's Anatomy of

Melancholy and Spencer's Fairy Queen, of themselves are each works requiring a lifetime. The other authors mentioned produced many works. Bacon's known works are voluminous. His official occupations must have required much of his time. Is it conceivable that he could have produced what has been attributed to him?

It is said the key has been found that proves him the author of all these. This wonderful key is like the pass key of hotel rooms which, if you only have, you can not only enter your own but every other room within a large circuit. And we are assured that, no doubt, other works that have passed under other names will be found by means of this key to have been written by Bacon.

What we have to do is to pick out a sentiment or perhaps a word in his works, like the word fortune, if you please; then range through the works claimed until we find where our key will fit and all is established. See how the word "Novum" in Love's Labor Lost (act 5, scene 11, line 542) is made to prove that the play was written by the author of the Novum Organim, though the word in the play has an entirely different meaning than in Bacon.

In considering parallelisms between Bacon's and Shakspere's works it should be kept in mind that each wrote after some works of the other had been published. It is fair to presume that each was acquainted with the published works of the other. If similar thoughts and expressions be found in each, this is only natural and what might be expected. To find in Shakspere sentiments and language such as may be found in Bacon, does not show that Bacon wrote Shakspere, any more than the finding of scripture thoughts and scripture language in a sermon

proves that the preacher wrote the gospels. On the other hand there are irreconcilable differences between the Shakspere works and Bacon's known works that conclusively show they were not written by the same author. A single fact absolutely inconsistent with the idea of Bacon's authorship of the plays refutes the inferences based on any number of resemblances.

In the present case there are ever so many facts inconsistent with the supposition. Some of these I have mentioned. Besides these the condition of the first collected edition of the plays when compared with the condition of Bacon's known works shows they were not by the same author. Bacon's works are perfect literary production, accurately printed. There is no evidence in them that the printer has mistaken the words of the author. On the other hand, the first collected edition of the plays contains a multitude of errors and printer's mistakes. It is certain that in numerous instances the printers mistook the words used by the author and printed instead words he did not use and which did not give his meaning. Commentators point out a large number. Thus the printers printed sound for south, abroad for aboard, rage for page, withered for weathered, a gentle for a gentile, voice for vice, course for court, wight for night, etc. Even the paging of this first folio of Shakspere contains many errors and is sometimes wholly wanting. Most of these mistakes are such as would never have escaped correction if an *author* had corrected the proofs of the printer. Especially is this true of the substitutions of words that gave the wrong meaning. Everything is different in Bacon's own acknowledged works. These things show first that Bacon did not write the works or, as has been claimed, even see the plays.

through the press, and second that the author, whoever he was, did not see the book carried through the press. Now Shakspere was dead when this book was printed, but Bacon was alive. These things alone show that the plays could not have been Bacon's, and further that the mistakes in the printing of the plays are due to the fact that they were printed after the author of them was dead, so that the proofs of the printer were not corrected by the author.

MOST persons will find it difficult to regard the things brought forward to support Bacon's authorship of the plays as having any tendency to support the conclusion sought.

For example, it has been said that because Bacon copied into his Promus this saying, "Give not that which is holy unto dogs," and in Shakspere's As You Like It, there is found this passage:

> Celia: . . Not a word?
> Rosalind: Not one to throw at a dog.
> Celia: No, thy words are too precious to cast away upon curs.*

Therefore Bacon wrote Shakspere. But this saying is found in the New Testament.†

Again, because Bacon copied into his Promus "Away, away ye profane," and there is in the Merry Wives of Windsor this passage:

> Rogues, hence, avaunt, vanish like hailstones, go, etc.‡

That therefore Bacon wrote this play. But the pas-

* Act 1, S. 3, L. 1.
† Matt., ch. 7, v. 6.
‡ Act 1, S. 3, L. 72.

sage is in the Ænid of Virgil, written sixteen hundred years before Bacon's day.

"Good morrow" is found in Bacon's Storehouse of sayings. It is often used as a salutation in the plays. Therefore it is said Bacon wrote them.

These various sayings were old when Bacon was born and were common stock.

It is difficult to regard those as reasoners who deduce such conclusions from such premises.

But Bacon makes no claim. It meets with no favor from the greatest students of Bacon. No biographer of his has found anything in his life to show he wrote the Shakspere works. No editor of his works has found anything in all his writings to show that he wrote them.

It is said that the author of the plays must have been acquainted with Latin, Greek, French and Spanish. That he must have been a lawyer and philosopher and been acquainted with the literature of all ages and countries.

Too much mere book learning is often insisted upon. The plays abundantly show the author had not an extensive knowledge of history and geography, such as Bacon possessed. Even the historical plays are founded on the facts given by a single author. For instance: Anthony and Cleopatra is founded on Plutarch alone. The legal learning in the plays is such as a man could in his position obtain. We know from Jonson he did know Latin and Greek.

Other things there are that the author must have understood. He must have been acquainted with all the ways of country life. Bacon was not. In his feelings he must have been ardent and emotional. Social in his nature. Bacon was not these. Do you

think the author of Bacon's Essay No. 10 could also have written Romeo and Juliet or The Tempest?

He must have had a varied experience. Bacon's experience was mostly in one line, Shakspere's in many. He must have been an actor. Bacon was not, Shakspere was.

We may safely state in conclusion; there is no evidence that Bacon wrote the Shakspere plays; there is ample proof that Shakspere did write them. We may rest assured that the laurels due the author of these plays rightfully belong on his brow, and that *he* is "THE NEVER DYING SHAKSPERE."

APPENDIX "A."

MENTION OF THESE WORKS AS SHAKSPERE'S IN HIS AND BACON'S LIFETIME.

Francis Meres in his Palladis Tamea in 1598 enumerates, as then extant, the Venus and Adonis, Lucrece, the Sonnets, Two Gentlemen of Verona, The Errors, Love Labor's Lost, Love Labor's Won, Midsummer Night Dream, Merchant of Venice, Richard II, Richard III, Henry IV, King John, Titus Andronicus, and Romeo and Juliet. He states these to be works of Shakspere.*

PUBLICATIONS.

WORK.	DATE.	AUTHOR NAMED ON THE TITLE PAGE.
Hamlet	1603 1604 1605 1608 1609 1611	By Wm. Shakspere.
Henry IV. Part I	1598 1599 1604 1608 1613 1622	No author given. Newly corrected by Wm. Shakspere.
Henry IV. Part II	1600	Written by Wm. Shakspere.
The Famous Victory of Henry V.	1598 1600 1617	No author named.
The Chronicle History of Henry V.	1600 1602 1608	No author named.
Henry VI. The whole famous contention between the two famous houses of Lancaster and York	1600 1600 1619	No author given. Written by Wm. Shakspere, Gent.
Henry VI. Part III	1595 1611	No author named. Written by Wm. Shakspere.
King John	1611 1622	Written by W—— Sh—— William Shakspere.
Lear	1608 1608 1608	William Shakspere.
Love Labor's Lost	1598	By Wm. Shakspere.

* See Halliwell-Phillipps Outline of the Life of Shakspere, Vol. 2, p. 149.

PUBLICATIONS—*Continued.*

WORK.	DATE.	AUTHOR NAMED ON THE TITLE PAGE.
Merchant of Venice	1600	Written by Wm. Shakspere.
Different edition	1600	
Merry Wives of Windsor	1602	Written by Wm. Shakspere.
	1619	
Midsummer Night's Dream	1600	Written by Wm. Shakspere.
Different edition	1600	
Much Ado About Nothing	1600	Written by Wm. Shakspere.
Othello	1622	Written by Wm. Shakspere.
Pericles	1609	Written by Wm. Shakspere.
	1609	
	1611	
	1619	
Richard II.	1597	No author named.
	1598	Written by Wm. Shakspere.
	1608	
	1615	
Richard III.	1594	No author's name given.
	1597	
	1598	By William Shakspere.
	1602	
	1605	
	1621	
Romeo and Juliet	1597	No author given.
	1599	
	1609	
	One of no date.	Written by Wm. Shakspere.
Taming of the Shrew	1594	No author given.
	1596	By William Shakspere.
	1607	
Titus Andronicus	1594	Author not given.
	1600	
	1611	
Troylus and Cressida	1609	Written by William Shakspere.
	1609	
The Folio or First Collected Edition. All the Plays	1623	"Mr. William Shakspere's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies."
Venus and Adonis	1593	Dedicated by Wm. Shakspere to the Earl of Southampton.
	1594	
	1596	
	1599	
	1600	
	1602	
	1602	
	1617	
	1620	
The Sonnets	1609	"Shakspere's Sonnets."

PUBLICATIONS—*Continued.*

WORK.	DATE.	AUTHOR NAMED ON THE TITLE PAGE.
Lucrece (See Variorum Ed. Vol. 2. p. 680).	1594, 1596, 1598, 1600, 1607, 1616, 1624	Dedicated by Shakspere to the Earl of Southampton.
The Passionate Pilgrim	1599, 1612	By William Shakspere.

Of some of the plays earlier mentions exist: In 1592, Green in his Gwatsworth of Wit refers to the III Henry VI as Shakspere's. Twelfth Night was acted before the members of the Middle Temple in 1601 (Manningham's Diary). As You Like It was entered on the Stationer's Register in 1600. Anthony and Cleopatra in 1608. Measure for Measure was acted at Court in 1604. The Tempest in 1611 (Account of Revels at Court). Macbeth was acted in 1610, The Winter's Tale in 1611 (Dr. Simon Forman's Diary). Henry VIII was being acted June 29, 1613, when the Globe Theatre took fire and was consumed. These mentions are previous to the publication of the plays named.

THE DOUBTFUL PLAYS ASCRIBED TO SHAKSPERE.*

WORKS.	WHEN PRINTED.	AUTHOR NAMED ON THE TITLE PAGE.
Tragedy of Locrine	1595	Overseen and corrected by "W. S."
First part of Sir John Oldcastle	1600, 1600	No author named. Wm. Shakspere.
Chronicle History of Thomas, Lord Cromwell	1602, 1613	No author named. Wm. Shakspere.
The London Prodigal	1605	Wm. Shakspere.
The Puritan	1607	Wm. Shakspere.
The Yorkshire Tragedy	1608	Wm. Shakspere.
Two Noble Kinsmen	1634	"Written by the memorable worthies of their time, Mr. John Fletcher and Mr. William Shakspere, Gent."

*See Knight's Shakspere Library, Ed. Vol. 12. p. 316.